

## Inspire: A celebration of children's art in response to Jacopo del Sellaio's Cupid and Psyche

Figure 1 Cupid and Psyche by Jacopo del Sellaio



Project Evaluation and Exhibition Report  
September 2020

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## 1. OVERVIEW OF THE INSPIRE PROJECT

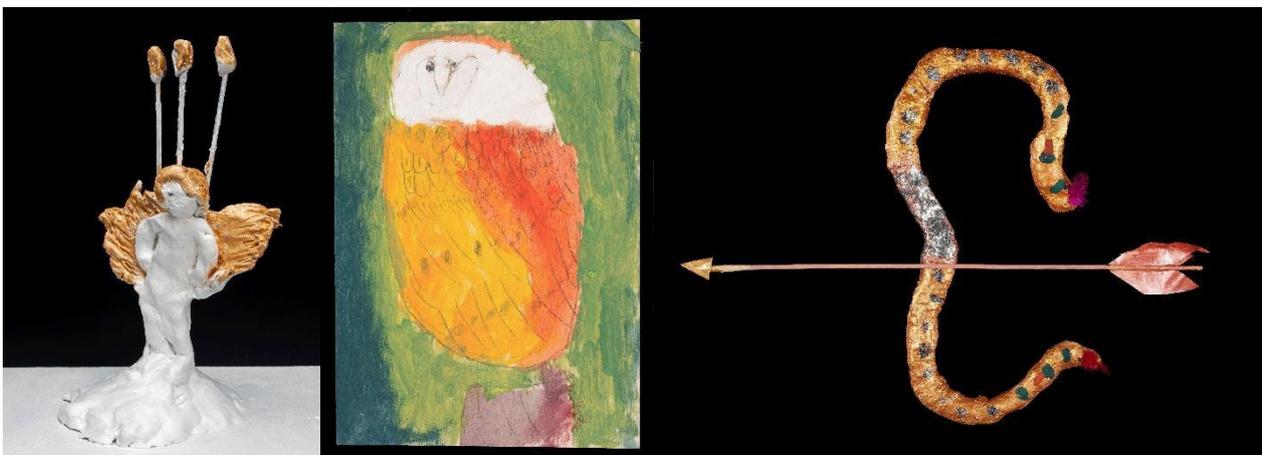


Figure 2 Composite image of the Inspire exhibition

*'Going to the Fitzwilliam really inspired me that art isn't just a thing: it's emotion -it shows how the painter feels, and that museums are magical places. It gives people the chance to experience history and to make memories.'*

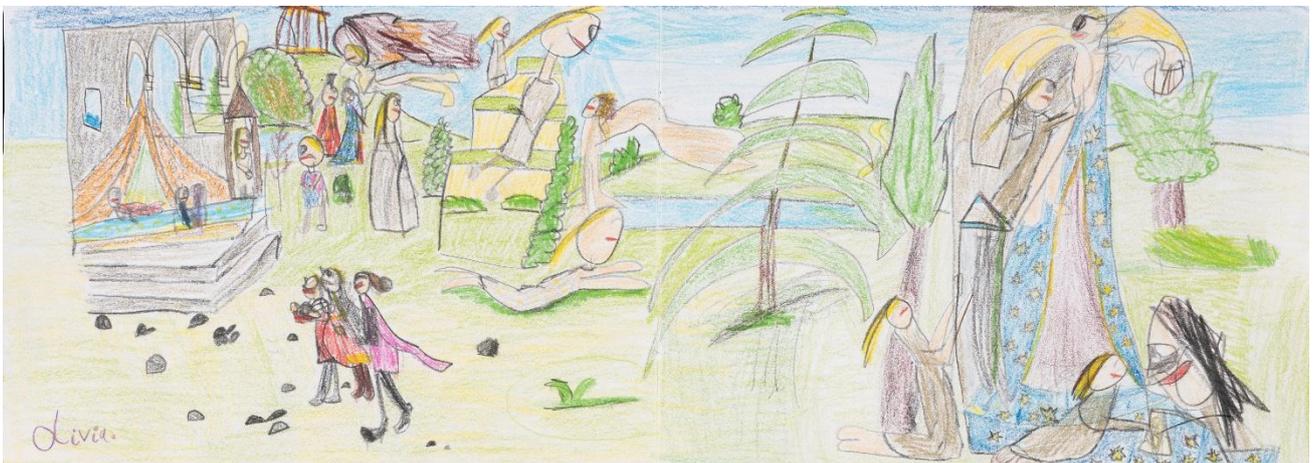
Student, aged 9

The Inspire action research project explored how a teacher training programme and exhibition at an art museum might support the development of teacher knowledge, confidence and skills in Art and Design. The resulting display was the first exhibition of children's artwork at The Fitzwilliam Museum in its 250 year history. The project was developed in partnership with artist-led charity AccessArt and brought together artists, research scientists, conservators, educators, school children and general museum visitors from across the local community. As the quote above demonstrates, the response to the project was very positive and many children were inspired by visiting the museum and by studying the painting in depth.



Figures 3, 4 & 5 Cupid by Bottisham Primary School, Owl by William Westley Primary School, Cupid's Bow and Arrow by Morley Memorial School

The Inspire project celebrated young people's creativity at a time of widespread concern over the decline of arts subjects in schools (National Society for Education in Art and Design, 2016). The involvement of schools and teachers from the local community encouraged families and young people to develop lasting and meaningful connections with the museum. Inspire built on the Museum's long-established teaching programme which encourages children and teachers to look deeply and thoughtfully at objects and images and to respond imaginatively through thinking, talking and making together. Following successful training sessions with 68 teachers from 40 schools in early 2019, hundreds of children visited the museum to look at the painting and thousands more studied it at school using bespoke digital learning resources. The project team also visiting some of the participating schools while they were working on the project which both enhanced their understanding of how the project was progressing and strengthened relationships with those schools. The exhibition then provided further opportunities for teacher training and the project team ran three further sessions between January and March 2020 which were attended by teacher from another 10 schools.



**Figure 6 Cupid and Psyche by 7 year old from Arbury Primary School**

The submissions received for the end of project exhibition were of an exceptionally high quality and included artwork in a range of different media including egg tempera paintings on wood, prints, drawings, mixed media collage, textiles, creative writing, and a variety of 3D models using wire, modroc and other materials. Several schools explored the painting across the whole school and held celebratory exhibitions and events within the school or local community. It was clear from these submissions that children and teachers had looked closely at the painting, experimented with different techniques and processes and worked collaboratively. The teachers made reference to the initial training sessions at the museum and used the digital learning resources shared through the museum website and by AccessArt.



**Figures 7 & 8 Vicky Sutcliffe and Paola Ricciardi working on Cupid and Psyche at the Hamilton Kerr Institute**

### **The Ways of Seeing Research Project**

As is common with practitioner-led action research, the project developed in many unexpected ways as part of an iterative process (McNiff, 2017). As the project was planned and delivered, the team responded to feedback to explore different avenues of investigation. This provided exciting opportunities for inter-disciplinary collaborations. Conservators and students from the Hamilton Kerr Institute (HKI) contributed to several of the teacher training sessions by sharing their MA research creating a del Sellaio reconstruction. This linked with other technical research within the museum as part of the ‘Ways of Seeing’ project. Research Scientist Paola Ricciardi carried out cutting-edge research on the painting using non-invasive analytical protocols HKI undertook X-ray and Infrared (IR) Reflectography scans to help better understand the structure of the panel and show any revisions in the under-drawing.



**Figure 9 & 10 Display of pigments identified in technical analysis and tray of handling objects from Artist’s Studio**

The technical analysis and resulting displays enhanced understanding of medieval materials and techniques and these findings were shared within the final exhibition. Colleagues at the Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences lent pigments for a display, and handling objects were provided which would have been found in the artist’s studio. Historic painting conservator Elspeth Geldhof made a

reproduction of part of the painting based on the findings of the new technical research. Visitors to the exhibition were invited to consider the process of preparing the panel and making egg tempera paint by looking closely at the replica panels and handling a selection of artist's tools and materials.

The findings of this technical analysis stimulated a further collaboration with Donal Cooper from the Department of History of Art, whose research focuses on Italian Renaissance art. His close examination of the newly cleaned painting enabled him to uncover new clues linking the panel directly to the Medici family, Renaissance Florence's leading patrons of art (Cooper and Noble, 2020). The findings of this new research then in turn informed the creation of a new AR App designed in partnership cultural heritage app developer Maggioli Musei and University of Florence researcher Giovanni Pescarmona. The new 'Ways of Seeing' smartphone app locks on to the artwork when the phone is held before the painting. A navigation bar at the bottom of the screen offers three overlay modes: 'Microscopy' (high magnification photography), 'Infrared' and 'X-ray' which allow the viewer to uncover the findings of the new technical research on the painting.



**Figure 11 & 12 Visitors using the new Ways of Seeing AR app**

## 2. PROJECT EVALUATION

The Inspire project and exhibition had three principal aims:

1. To develop teacher knowledge, skills and confidence teaching Art and Design and working from museum objects
2. To encourage children to form meaningful connections and to respond creatively to the museum collection
3. To use the exhibition as a platform to advocate for the importance of creativity and Art and Design education locally and nationally

### 2.1 WHAT DATA DID WE COLLECT?

	Pre –project	Exhibition	Post Project
<b>ProjectTeam</b>	Data on participating schools Photographs	Reflective notes (n6) Photographs	Blog posts (n8) Interviews (n2) Photographs
<b>Teachers</b>	Feedback Survey (n35)	Email correspondence (n6) Transcripts of public talks (n2) Interviews (n4)	Blog posts (n4) Feedback survey (n12)
<b>Children</b>	Visitor figures	Submissions (n3800) Interview transcripts (n7)	
<b>Visitors</b>		Visitor figures Visitor surveys (n23) <sup>1</sup> Visitor observations (n20)	Email correspondence (n14)

**Table 1 Data Collection Chart**

The evaluation draws on a range of different feedback from museum staff, teachers, visitors and children over the course of the project. The team documented the project by photographing each of the different elements of the project from the initial training sessions, to the school visits, to the examination of the panel, to the process of selecting the artworks and hanging the exhibition. These images are vital evidence of the process of the project and provided valuable opportunities for discussion and reflection. A summary of the data collected is shown in Table 1. A content analysis of the data identified a series of themes in relation to the project aims and looked for any other impacts or outcomes. The report has been organised under the four main themes which emerged from this analysis. The data has been anonymised throughout except where explicit

<sup>1</sup> The visitor evaluation was finished early due to the closure of the museum due to COVID19 so we have fewer results here than originally planned

consent has been sought for inclusion within this report. The names of participating schools and artworks has been retained in acknowledgement of their contribution to the project.

## 2.2 'IT MADE ME TEACH IN A DIFFERENT WAY': CHANGING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

### Developing teacher knowledge, skills and confidence in Art and Design

The high volume and quality of responses to the Inspire project indicate that it was highly successful in supporting teachers to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence teaching Art and Design and working with museum collections. The initial teacher training sessions at the museum were very highly rated by the participants. 100% of the participants who filled in a CPD feedback survey, agreed or strongly agreed that they felt capable of using the painting in their teaching after taking part in the session. Feedback indicated that teachers had really valued the opportunity to work with specialists within the sessions and had been introduced to new knowledge about how to support visual literacy and teach about Renaissance Art and processes as these comments demonstrate,

*'It was amazing!!! Inspirational ladies leading the course and fantastic resources. Possibly the best CPD I have participated in in 20 years of teaching. Thank you SO much!!*

*'So good to get hands on with other creative minds. I watched in awe at other artists. The buzz of creativity was inspiring. Lovely to have the experts on hand.'*

*'Lots of ideas on how I can focus and get the children I teach to reflect about what they see when looking at art.'* (comments from the CPD feedback survey)

The success of these initial training days was evidenced by the number of schools and teachers that took part in the project. Teachers reported being both inspired, refreshed and emboldened by the sessions and they returned to school full of ideas and determination to make the project succeed within their setting. Over the next few months over 500 children visited the museum to look at the painting with their classes. Many thousands more also studied it at school using the high resolution reproductions and learning resources created in partnership with AccessArt.

There is also evidence that the project changed the way in which some schools and teachers planned and delivered Art. These statements from the post project survey demonstrate this impact,

*The children loved the project as did I, ... it made me teach in a different way.*

*I will now link paintings at the museum to my art teaching... I am now able to use paintings as a stimulus... I feel more inspired to do creative things in schools after seeing the huge impact it made and the positive feedback from parents (post project teacher survey)*

All the teachers that filled in the post project evaluation at the end of March 2020 agreed, strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that they felt capable of using paintings in their teaching and that they developed knowledge, skills and confidence as part of the Inspire project. The change in approach

to the teaching of Art and Design was also apparent in the children's reflections on the project, as these comments from the submissions reflect,

*'Normally, in Art, we all have to do the same thing. I really enjoyed having the chance to experiment and choose what I wanted to do and how I wanted to do it.'* (student, aged 9)

These comments reveal how empowering it can be to give children the opportunity to lead their own learning and work collaboratively. The project demonstrates how art can empower young people to think deeply, to make choices and to express themselves and is explored further in the section below.

### **Raising the profile of Art and Design**

*Being involved in the project helped to raise the profile of Art and Design by giving a real purpose to the learning and also helped to action some of our Artsmark goals (ensuring CPD has a direct impact on teaching and opportunities)* (teacher survey feedback)

Teachers also reported how Inspire had helped to raise the profile of Art within their school as the quote above demonstrates. This shows that the project was successful at meeting its aim of supporting teachers to develop their confidence and understanding of Art and Design and in supporting teachers to advocate for this work within their individual settings. The exhibition also raised the profile of Art and Design locally through a feature on Look East which focused on how the project made art accessible to schools and children across the county. They interviewed a head teacher from a Fenland school who talked about how the project had created an opportunity for the children in a school where they weren't teaching much Art and Design. She described how Inspire had encouraged them to review and develop their Art teaching across the school. The project team were invited to present the project at the All Party Parliamentary Group for Art and Design Education where it was cited as an example as how museums and artists might work together to support art teaching in schools.

## **2.3 'I FEEL JUST LIKE A REAL ARTIST! CHANGING CREATIVE PRACTICE**

### **Inspiring children and teachers to make art**

The exhibition was testament to how both children and teachers had been inspired to be creative. The choice of the Renaissance panel painting is also significant here as it was made at time when young children would have worked in the artist' studio, helping to prepare materials and equipment and training to be artist themselves. There is a lovely parallel here with the Inspire project training a new generation of aspiring artists. At the training session teachers were encouraged to explore their own creativity and ideas with the aim of modelling how children might be encouraged to do the same. As part of the submission process teachers interviewed children

about what they had learnt by taking part in the project. Their responses revealed how they had enjoyed opportunities to try things out and experiment with materials and techniques, as this quote demonstrates,

*'My picture is based on the mountain Cupid was brought to in the story. When I was experimenting with charcoal and graphite for the lake I noticed I could blend them together. When I was doing the lakes perspective I struggled a lot but I was doing it from the bottom looking up...'* (student, aged 9)

This response also reminds us again what a serious enterprise looking at and making art is for young children.



**Figures 13 & 14 Teachers studying Cupid and Psyche and experimenting with pigments at Inspire training session**

Many of the participating schools devised opportunities for children to have time and space to make their own decisions and to follow their own ideas and inspiration. The success of this intervention is apparent in the children's reflections on the project, *'I felt just like a real artist!'* (student, aged 5) *'Working with the clay was really fun and we felt very proud that we had thought of this idea and followed it through from beginning to end.'* (student, aged 9) Their comments again show how empowering this experience was for them as young artists and makers. With the emphasis on reading and writing in many primary schools, opportunities to explore visual modes of communication and expression in this way are both rare and vitally important (see Noble, 2006, NSEAD, 2016).

Many visitors to the exhibition also admired how children were given the opportunity to follow their own ideas and interests. This was evidenced by many reports from teachers and parents. One parent told us how their child was inspired to draw after her visit to the museum with her parents and they had to borrow paper and crayons for her to use when she got home as she didn't have any of her own. Her drawing was displayed at the start of the exhibition (see figure 3). When she visited the exhibition parents six months later, her parents reported that she was still drawing at every opportunity but now has a suitcase full of art materials after Christmas gifts from all her family to support her creative talents.

The range of different materials, techniques and ideas on show within the final exhibition are further evidence of how teachers and children experimented and tried out different materials and techniques. The 3D works in particular attracted much admiration and received many positive reviews from visitors. Children visiting the exhibition also found it interesting to see others had interpreted the painting. Perhaps for this reason, there were several comments in the feedback about the need to include more detail of the individual projects in the exhibition labels. People were interested in how the children had explored the painting with their teachers. There were also requests for videos showing the children talking about their work to help get more of an idea of the breadth of each project.

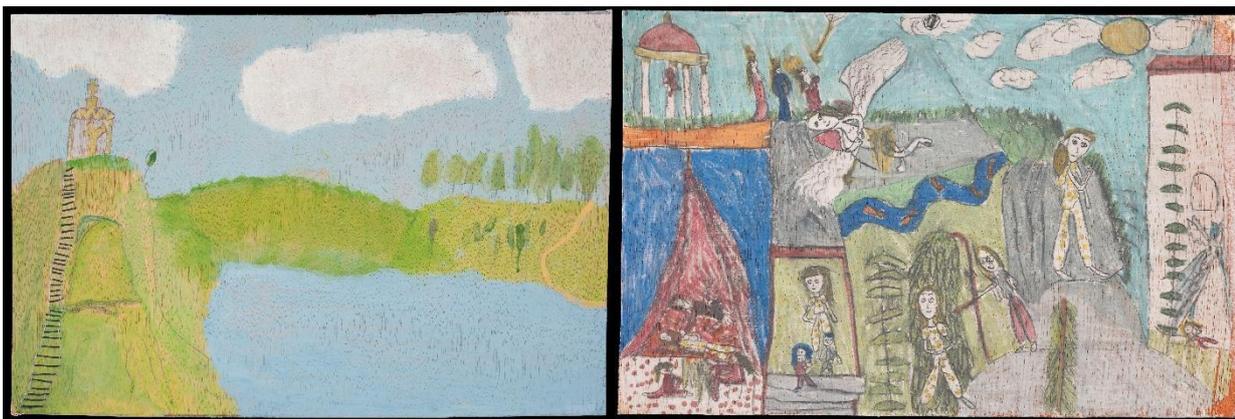


Figure 15 &16 Landscapes by Bottisham Primary School

### Inspiring visitors to create

Exhibition visitors were impressed by the diversity and variety of the work on display. The word cloud in figure 16 gives an idea of some of the different responses of members of the public to the exhibition. The words creative, colourful, inspiring, different, interesting and fun appear frequently in other feedback too.



Figure17 Words most commonly used to describe the Inspire exhibition (from 23 visitor surveys)

These positive impacts were felt both by the children and teachers whose work was included in the exhibition and by visitors to the museum. *'It is really interesting to see everyone else's work and how they have taken it'* (7 year old student interviewed at Private View) *'It feels pretty amazing our work being put up and people taking time to look and appreciate it.'* (10 year old student, ArtSpeak presentation) Several teachers reported being moved to tears when they first saw the exhibition and feedback from Front of House staff also reflect the enjoyment the exhibition brought to visitors.



Figures 18 & 19 teachers and children looking at the exhibition during the Private View © Martin Bond

Learning staff leading an art appreciation session for people with dementia and their carers based on the exhibition described how the displays had stimulated participants to make their own artworks as part of the session. Another museum educators reported a profound effect on one of the pupils she was working with from a local school for children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities),

*'One of the pupils, who has significant speech and communication difficulties, tapped my arm for attention, and showed me the picture for 'happy' in his PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) file. He then signed 'happy' in Makaton. I signed back: 'You're happy? That's great!', and he signed 'I'm happy' while smiling. He took me to his teacher, got his attention, and pointed again to 'happy' in the file. He had not done this in the other galleries, and seemed to want to let us know that he especially liked this one!'* (museum educator notes)

These visitors found something invigorating and exciting about seeing the children's artwork on display. Visiting teachers and students took photos and made notes to take ideas back with them to the classroom and studio. It was hoped that Cupid and Psyche would inspire children and teachers to create but it was interesting to see that many visitors to the exhibition were in turn inspired by the children's artwork.

One of the displays in the exhibition was a love letter written by Cupid to Psyche created by one of the children from St Peter's School in Wisbech. A post box was mounted underneath the letter and

visitors were invited to write a letter to someone they love and post it through the box. Over 100 visitors left letters in the box. Many letters contained heartfelt messages to family members, friends, pets and lovers of a range of ages and stages of life and told moving stories of love, loss and loss through time and across different continents. The success of this installation and range of responses demonstrate that visitors deeply connected with the theme of love within the Cupid and Psyche story and shows the value in providing visitors with opportunities to respond creatively to exhibition themes as part of the display.

#### 2.4 'I LOOKED AT IT THROUGH ENTIRELY NEW EYES': NEW PERSPECTIVES ON RENAISSANCE ART, MATERIALS AND PROCESSES

### Learning about Renaissance Art

The project developed teacher, student and museum visitor knowledge and understanding by providing information about the painting and artistic techniques and materials. Many schools spent weeks looking at and talking about the painting,

*The Cupid and Psyche painting was something most of our children would have never seen or heard of but now, if you ask any of the children in Year 1 and Year 2 at my school, they can tell you the entire story from start to finish! (post project teacher survey)*

Another school noticed how children were 'nattering' about the painting in the playground, thinking about what happened next (transcript from Art Speak talk). The link with the museum and HKI pigment research enabled this impact to be wider than originally envisaged by providing opportunities for teachers to explore the links between Art and Science. One school studied the writings of Renaissance artist Cennino Cennini to find out about how egg tempera paint was made, another invited a local scientist to help them to carry out some experiments on the effects of colour and light on plants.

User testing of the AR app based on the findings of the specially commissioned research on Cupid and Psyche was cut short due to early closure of the exhibition as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. However, initial feedback was very enthusiastic with one visitor remarking, '*What would he [del Sellaio] think? All those secrets! He spent so long hiding all his mistakes and now we can see them all!*' The exhibition team are currently working in partnership with the research scientist to develop a new 'Colour and Chemistry' session for young children based on the results of the technical analysis and ongoing scientific research. At the initial pilot session with a small group of teachers, they were very enthusiastic about the app with one teacher describing it as a, '*Fantastic resource as it tells the story within the story and makes the artist and his decisions appear more real*'. Participating teachers reported that they had found the training day very beneficial and that it had boosted their confidence and motivation and inspired them to improve their art and science teaching and make links with other areas of the curriculum. The team are now putting together a handling kit containing pigments, microscopes and reproductions of the painting and technical

scans which will be launched as an outreach session for local schools during Science Week in March 2021.



**Figures 20 & 21 Teachers looking at X-Ray scans and using the Ways of Seeing AR App in ‘Colour and Chemistry’ consultation project**

### **New ideas and perspectives to stimulate museum research**

As is common with action research of this kind, the project developed in many unexpected ways as part of an iterative process in response to the interest of local schools and teachers. The collaborative and audience led ethos of the project enabled academic staff to test new approaches to displaying, interpreting and commissioning object-based research as the children and teachers’ interests in Cupid and Psyche stimulated museum researchers to carry out further investigations on the painting. The project coincided with the Fitzwilliam Museum Mission Review which identified the need for more interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure a multiplicity of voices (The Fitzwilliam Museum, 2019). Inspire offers an example of how collaborations with local communities to enrich and re-imagine research around our collections, as the museum director Luke Syson reflects,

*I think it is so valuable and important that curators, and scientists and conservators too, don’t just sit in their offices guarded from the public, but on the contrary, can have their research guided by the kinds of questions that they are asked, ... we learn from that process.*

Research scientist Paola Ricciardi also reflected on how Inspire had encouraged interdisciplinary collaborations within and outside of the museum,

*I also hope that it’s only the first of many closer collaborations between various departments including Learning – I do think it’s time for us all to co-curate exhibitions and display more, and blur the boundaries perhaps a bit – ie obviously continuing to be conscious of our respective expertise, but not afraid to dip our toes into each other’s domain/discipline, which would help generate novel ideas*

The teacher’s and children’s perspectives were evidenced not only in the artwork but within the interpretation panels which included quotations from participating teachers and children. The value

of creating a space within the museum for different ideas, interpretations and expertise is echoed in feedback from academics such as this university professor who told the project team, *'as an Italian Renaissance person who must have seen that painting hundreds of times, I looked at it through entirely new eyes.'* Experts from both within the museum and the wider university valued the way in which the children's responses helped them to see the painting differently.

## 2.5 'IT FEELS PRETTY AMAZING': THE MUSEUM AS A FOCUS FOR COMMUNITY CREATIVITY, PRIDE AND CELEBRATION

### **A place for professional pride and community celebration**

Another significant theme within the exhibition data is the tremendous pride which schools and families felt on seeing their art work on display in the museum. This reveals the potential of the museum as a focus for community celebration and for bringing people together. This was also evidenced in the feedback from the CPD sessions at the beginning of the 2019, as these comments in response to the question 'What did you gain from the session?' reveal,

*'A sense of renewed hope that there are art initiatives taking place for schools. Excitement that this one is linked to our nearby Fitzwilliam Museum.'*

This pride stems from the perceived prestige and importance of the museum as a venue within the local community. Many visitors and participants were impressed by the quality of both the children's artwork and the professional quality of the display,

*'It feels pretty amazing our work being put up and people taking the time to look and appreciate it. (transcript of 10 year old student from ArtSpeak)*

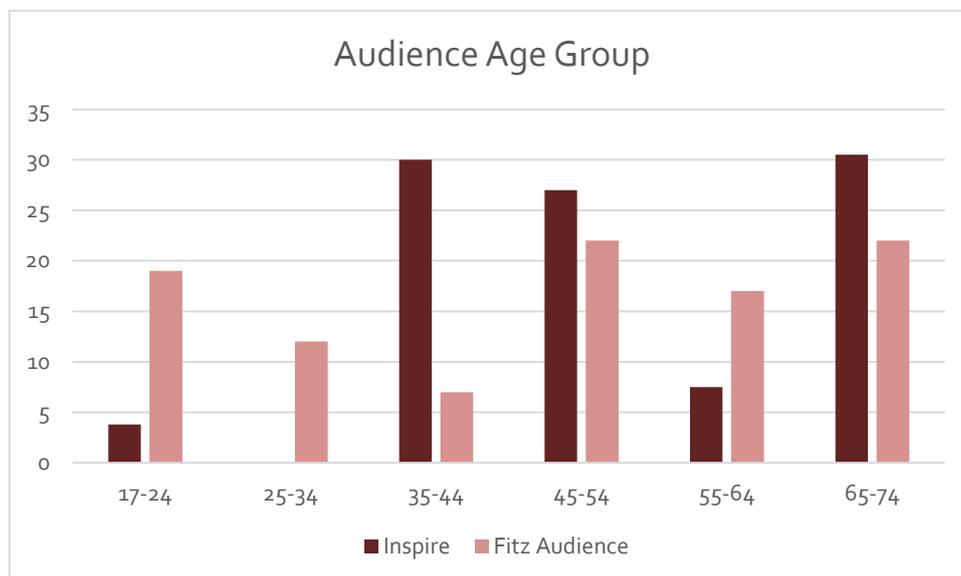
*'Both pupils and parents felt immensely proud to have their work exhibited at the FM. It was a very positive experience for all of us.'* (teacher survey)

The positioning of the exhibition in one of the main galleries of the museum contributed to this powerful impact and demonstrated the museum's strong commitment to community engagement. The museum director's decision to hang the picture in the same room as the children's art work enabled visitors to make direct links between the original painting and the art work which it had inspired.

### **Widening Participation and Working with New Audiences**

2019-20 Audience Finder data revealed families are underrepresented across the visitors to the University of Cambridge Museums. Only 2.9% of visitors surveyed fell into the Facebook Families

segment compared to a 5% regional share, with the Trips and Treats segment attracting 13% compared to a 21% regional share. Although the demographic data collected was on relatively small number of visitors (n50) it is interesting to consider if there is any evidence of attracting a different demographic.



**Figure 22 Age of survey respondents aged 17 and over in comparison to Audience Agency data on Fitzwilliam Museum visitors as a percentage**

Just under half of the visitors we surveyed were aged under 16. Table 2 shows the breakdown in ages of visitors to the exhibition aged over 16 to enable comparison to the Audience Finder Survey Data (2017-18). (The Fitzwilliam Museum Audience Agency data doesn't include visitors under 16.) Audience Finder reported that the majority of Fitzwilliam Museum visitors surveyed were aged between 45 and 75 (51%) with only 7% aged 35-45. In comparison to this 30% of visitors to Inspire fall within the 35-45 years age group. This is not surprising due to the large number of children visiting the exhibition as one might assume that these adults were accompanying them, but is worth considering when asking how to widen the appeal of museum displays to families and children.

An analysis of the data collected on the participating schools reveals that many had not previously visited the museum. Follow up phone calls and emails revealed that this was due to a number of different factors but often the cost or the distance from the museum was cited as a cause. There were also many schools who made the decision to work with the whole school on the project and, therefore, could not bring everyone to visit. There were also a significant number of participating schools with a higher than average number of children on pupil premium, an indication of socio-economic deprivation. This finding tallies with research on the National Gallery's Take One Picture project which also found a high uptake of the projects within schools of this kind (Centre for the Use of Research & Evidence in Education, 2013).

It is interesting to consider how the participatory ethos of the project was interpreted and enhanced within the communities of the individual schools. In her speech at the Private View, the Deputy Head Teacher from one of the schools described how the Inspire ethos fed into the inclusive values of her school,

*For us this project has meant so many things but fundamentally it links with our school's values of inclusion, of equality, of trying to create a safe happy space where the adults and children together can learn a lot and be ourselves while we are doing it. (transcript from private view speech)*

The Inspire community extended within the individual schools too, 'drawn together by a shared understanding and awareness of the themes and the story within the painting' (Teacher post project feedback). Many of the schools who took part in the project held exhibitions, celebrations and special assemblies within their own local communities to celebrate children's work. Members of the project team visited some of the schools visited 8 schools to observe Inspire sessions and see some of the work that they had made.

The project highlighted the power of art to bring people together. Unfortunately, due to restrictions of space, the museum were not able to display the work that every school or child created in response to the painting. Although schools has been warned about this from the outset that this would be the case, many were unprepared for how difficult this was in practice. This had the unfortunate effect of leaving some schools and teachers disappointed. The project team worked hard through the exhibition public programme to reach out to those schools and teachers and invite them back in to share their stories and celebrate their work. Many of these projects were acknowledged within the exhibition booklet and online exhibition. In future projects of this kind it would be worth considering how every participating school might be acknowledged and celebrated in some way.

## 2.6 SUMMARY OF EVALUATION FINDINGS

The Inspire exhibition showcased young children's responses to a Renaissance painting of Cupid and Psyche by Florentine artist Jacopo del Sellaio. The project was part of a primary teacher training programme at the Fitzwilliam Museum run in partnership with local artist led charity AccessArt. The 3800 submissions received for the exhibition in October 2019 demonstrated that the project was successful in meeting its aims of developing teacher knowledge, confidence and skills working from the museum collection and teaching Art and Design. By focusing on training teachers and providing high quality digital resources to support teaching in schools, the project was accessible to far more children and schools than would have been able to visit in person. The learning from this project will be invaluable as museums look to develop their offer to schools post COVID-19.

This was the first exhibition of its kind at the Fitzwilliam and coincided with a period of Strategic Review at the museum. The iterative, collaborative and audience-led ethos of the project enabled museum staff to test new approaches to displaying, interpreting and commissioning object-based research. The interest of the local schools and teachers in the painting stimulated the commissioning of new academic research into the painting which then formed part of the exhibition. The presentation of this pigment research, shown alongside the painting and the children's artwork enabled visitors to the exhibition to further develop their understanding of the painting and of Renaissance materials and processes.

The project also demonstrated the power of the local museum as a hub for community creativity and engagement. It revealed how audience-led exhibitions and projects can bring people from across the region together to create a space for different voices, perspectives and narratives. This is particularly powerful when those voices are drawn from under-represented groups in museums, such as the young children. As hoped, the high profile of the exhibition helped to raise the status of Art and Design in local schools and through features in the local press. The Inspire team presented the project to the All Party Parliamentary Group for Art and Design Education at the Houses of Parliament and have subsequently been invited to sit on a steering group putting together a white paper on teacher training.

The project points the way to potential of more of this work of this kind to support the museum's mission to *'touch people's lives by engaging powerfully, thoughtfully and pleasurably.'* (The Fitzwilliam Museum, 2019) Inspire was designed to encourage teachers and children to form meaningful connections with the museum collection. These aims were made explicit at the start and the intended audience were placed at the heart of its planning and development. This model might be interesting to consider when planning future exhibitions.



Figures 23 & 24 Psyche's Dress and children and teachers from St Peters School

## 3. EXHIBITION REPORT

### DATE

7<sup>th</sup> December 2019 – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 (ended 18<sup>th</sup> March due to the COVID-19 museum closure)

### TOTAL VISITOR FIGURES

33,410 visitors (31.93% of the total visitors to the museum over the run of the exhibition)

### GALLERY

Octagon Gallery with additional pieces in Gallery 31, the courtyard staircase and the schools lunchroom

**PROJECT TEAM** Kate Noble (Project Lead), Sheila Ceccerelli (AccessArt), Holly Morrison and Sarah Villis with advice and support from Luke Syson, Miranda Stearn, Paula Briggs, Paola Ricciardi and staff and students from HKI

### PROJECT MANAGEMENT

David Evans, Exhibition Manager

Holly Morrison, Sarah Villis, Inspire Programmes and Operations Co-ordinators

### ABOUT PROJECT PARTNERS ACCESSART

Our project partner AccessArt is a registered UK charity founded by Paula Briggs and Sheila Ceccerelli. AccessArt aims to inspire and enable high-quality visual arts education by running workshops, projects, and events and sharing teaching and learning via their website. Income created by memberships is used to develop inspirational resources and advocate for the importance of art in education.

### Funding income

The Marlay Group, Arts Council England Band 3 National Portfolio Organisation funding to University of Cambridge Museums consortium (Formal Learning budget and Fitzwilliam Museum Strategic Enablement Grant), Cambridge City Council Community Grant, University of Cambridge REF Impact Fund

### Exhibition Loans

5 specimens from the Sedgwick Museum for the pigment case:

CAMSM 15366 minium,

CAMSM 16367 lazurite,

CAMSM 16803.1 cinnabar/ CAMSM 16803.2 cinnabar,

CAMSM 16812 glauconite

### Digital Resources

Inspire exhibition pages provided on the Museum's own website and managed by Georgina Doji (FM) at [INSPIRE2020](#). We also created a small online exhibition to share some of the projects which we were unable to display in the museum.

AccessArt blogs and resources created as part of the teacher training programme at [Inspire: A Celebration of Children's Art in Response to Jacopo del Sellaio's Cupid and Psyche](#)

Ways of Seeing AR app created in collaboration with University of Florence researcher Giovanni Pescarmona, and Cambridge Art Historian Donal Cooper and Florence-based app developer Maggioli Group [AR app demystifies techniques of Renaissance artists](#)

## 4. PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS



Figure 25 Collage by Linton Heights Primary School

Arbury Primary School, Bottisham Primary School,  
Cheveley C of E Primary School,  
Great and Little Shelford C of E Primary School,  
Great Giddings C of E Primary School,  
Harston and Newton Community Primary School,  
Haslingfield Endowed Primary School,  
Hauxton Primary School,  
Heritage School,  
Histon and Impington Junior School,  
Houghton Primary School,  
Kings Hedges Primary School,  
Linton Heights Junior School,  
Mayfield Primary School,  
Milton Road Primary School,

Morley Memorial Primary School,  
Peckover Primary School,  
Robert Arkenstall Primary School,  
Samuel Pepys School,  
St Laurence's Catholic Primary School,  
St Peters, Stamford School,  
Stapleford Community Primary School,  
Thorndown Primary School,  
Thriplow C of E Primary School,  
Cambridge University Primary School,  
The Vine Interchurch Primary School,  
Wheatfields Primary School,  
Wilburton C of E Primary School,  
William Westley C of E Primary School,  
Willingham Primary School

## 5.DISPLAY



Figures 26 & 27 Visitors in the exhibition

### Wall paint

Cocoa Blush

### Installation

Gallery design/layout by Kate Noble, Holly Morrison, Sarah Villis and Sheila Ceccerelli from AccessArt

Installation by Jamie Turner from Paradigm 33 and Charis Millet

Gallery build by Sam Forster Associates

2D graphics designed by Gorm Ashurst from Bullet Creative

Graphics Production by Omnicolour

Lighting Design by Lightwaves Ltd

Purpose built display cases and staging were constructed from conservation grade mdf. A perspex hood was used over the pigment case.

### Object Preparation and Installation

Vicky Sutcliffe, Hamilton Kerr Institute

Paola Ricciardi

Jane Ison, Nyl Fall, Richard Carpenter and Timothy Matthews

Additional assistance from Fitzwilliam technicians, maintenance and education teams

## 6. PRESS AND MARKETING

Inspire was marketed through the extensive AccessArt mailing lists who also sent termly mailouts highlighting the project to their 6000 members between 14/2/19 until the 6/3/2020. Look East ran a special feature on the exhibition in February and interviewed the exhibition curators and teachers and children who had taken part. The piece also included an interview with Hedley Swain, Area Director for South East for Arts Council England who linked the exhibition with their recently launched Let's Create strategy. Cambridge Independent ran a piece on the exhibition with a photograph of the curator and children's artwork. The exhibition was reviewed by Psychologist Magazine which paid tribute to the range of artwork on display and was impressed by the inclusion of 'hands on' interactive elements such as the reproduction wooden panels and artist studio props. Following the launch of the Ways of Seeing AR app the exhibition team co-authored an article for Apollo online with Donal Cooper sharing the underlying research and making links with the Virtual Florence research project at the Department of History of Art.

The Inspire exhibition carried a budget of £1000 for marketing. We distributed 7 posters for 14 weeks placed in key sites across the city, as well as to primary & secondary schools, youth clubs & community centres. An advert and editorial was placed in the February half-term edition of Primary Times - a free A4 full colour publication with 35,000 copies distributed via primary schools in Cambridgeshire, going home with pupils to the extended family. A Facebook advert targeted at families was also run to raise awareness of the exhibition. We also promoted the exhibition through our Twitter and Facebook accounts.

## 7. LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT

Between February and May 2019, 68 teachers from 40 schools participated in Inspire training sessions led by museums educators and artists from AccessArt. Over the next six months, 3800 primary school pupils across Cambridgeshire took part in Cupid and Psyche related projects. Over the course of the exhibition, 682 members of the public took part in Inspire related events. Two final planned events were cancelled due to the COVID19 museum closure.

### **Schools and Teachers**

Two hundred people attended the afternoon Private View on 7 December 2020. 188 pupils visited the exhibition with their classes. Feedback from schools and Front of House staff suggests that many children came to visit the exhibition and see their work on display with their families and friends.

33 teachers took part in training sessions delivered in partnership with AccessArt during the exhibition. Each session focused on a different theme (sketchbooks, colour and 3D modelling) and we invited teachers who had taken part in their project to share their work with other teachers who were first time participants in CPD at the museum. Paola Ricciardi took part in the colour workshop

and shared her research on pigment analysis with participants. 7 teachers took part in the Colour and Chemistry workshops.

### Children and families

In addition to the Private View, we welcomed 232 children and families to two Inspire-related family events. In January, 206 people took part in a special Inspire Family First Saturday exploring mythology throughout the collection. Children and families enjoyed hearing a Cupid and Psyche inspired story and painting their own wooden panels in the studio. In February, artist Kaitlin Ferguson led a children's workshop on colour and pigment which was attended by 26 children.

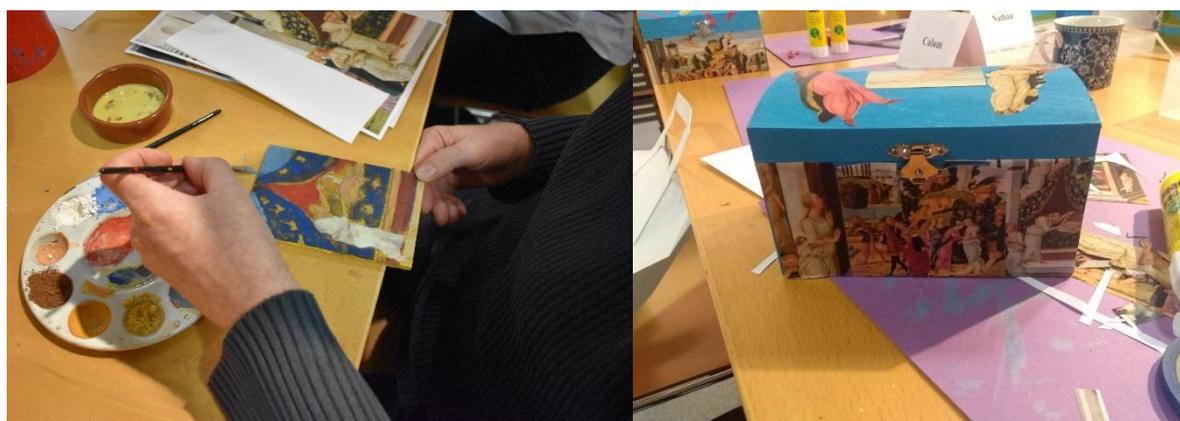


Figure 28 & 29 Adult art pigment workshops and Portals to the World wooden chest

### Adults (targeted)

In February, we ran an event for our Portals to the World art appreciation course for people living at home with a dementia diagnosis and their care partners. 28 participants and 6 volunteers took part in an Inspire session led by member of the Inspire team Holly Morrison. After a gallery talk and lots of lively conversation and questions, participants painted their own wooden chests in a studio workshop.

### Events (open programme)

The exhibition team ran 6 public events for 181 participants over the course of the exhibition. Members of the exhibition team led an Artspeak about the project and the Director and curators gave a lunch time talk sharing their experiences of planning the exhibition and working with local communities. A third talk was led by children and teachers from Linton Heights Junior School who talked about their artworks and what they liked about the painting. Holly Morrison and Paola Ricciardi led an adult art workshop based on Cupid and Psyche in February where participants were given the opportunity to experiment with egg tempera. We also had 40 attendees at a public talk led by Donal Cooper titled '*A Love Story for the Medici? The story of Cupid and Psyche on Renaissance wedding chests*'. 100 students came to a special evening launch event for the new Ways of Seeing app as part of the Love Art After Dark late opening. Sadly the final talk, '*Cupid and Psyche: Scientific insights into the painting behind Inspire*', by Paola Ricciardi and Vicky Sutcliffe was cancelled due to the COVID19 museum closure.

## 8. REFERENCES

AccessArt (2020) Inspire Project pages <https://www.accessart.org.uk/inspire-a-celebration-of-childrens-art-in-response-to-iacopo-del-sellaio-cupid-and-psyche/>

AccessArt (2019b) blog posts capturing CPD sessions (1) <https://www.accessart.org.uk/inspire-2020-teachers/> (2) <https://www.accessart.org.uk/egg-tempera-gesso-panel/>

AccessArt (2019c) blog post written when exhibition opened capturing the whole project <https://www.accessart.org.uk/cupid-and-psyche-how-a-fifteenth-century-renaissance-panel-became-the-most-loved-painting-in-cambridgeshire/>

Centre for the Use of Research & Evidence in Education (2013) *Exploring the impact of the National Gallery's Take One Picture (TOP) programme Final report.*

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